

FOOD SAFETY

ONE OF THE BEST on the planet

In Canada, we produce some of the safest food in the world. A 2014 report ranked Canada and Ireland as the top countries for food safety.¹ From the farm to our plate, all those involved in food production follow strict regulations and procedures to ensure that what Canadians eat meets our high standards for safe food.

✓ ON THE FARM

Farmers and ranchers are committed to food safety. They work closely with veterinarians to prevent the occurrence of diseases in their animals. They also help fund research into animal health.

Traceability means being able to trace back to the source of a foodborne illness. For example, if many people who ate at the same restaurant get sick, the source of the illness may be traced from the restaurant to the wholesaler to the food processor to the farm. Once the source of the illness is identified, steps can be taken to make sure no one else gets sick.

Under the **Canadian Cattle Identification Program**², every dairy and beef animal must wear an ear tag that can be traced back to the farm where it was born. Bison and sheep also require ear tags for this purpose. All animals (including poultry) can also be traced back to their origins through a Premises Identification number assigned to every farm.

Biosecurity refers to steps farmers take to prevent diseases from coming onto their farms. On most pork and chicken farms, employees and farm visitors are required to shower and change their clothing before they are allowed to enter and exit barns.



Vegetables packaged in the field for transport to the grocery store

✓ GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Health Canada establishes policies, regulations and standards to ensure the safety of food sold in Canada.³

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is responsible for enforcing food safety policies and standards that Health Canada sets. CFIA controls food packaging and labelling, and manages food safety emergencies, including food recalls.⁴ They also conduct regular tests on food products to ensure neither domestic nor imported food poses a risk to human health.⁵

Canada has one of the best food inspection systems in the world, rated “superior” in their handling of most foodborne illnesses and their ability to respond to food safety emergencies.⁶

When Canadians become ill from foods they eat, **The Public Health Agency of Canada**, together with Health Canada and CFIA, work with local health authorities to protect the public.⁷



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✓ FOOD PROCESSORS AND THE FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

CFIA's *Guide to Food Safety*⁸, based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for safe food handling, has been developed for use by food processors, restauranteurs and others involved in food production. Farmer organizations in Canada have also developed HACCP-based food safety programs for particular animal species they raise.

Many restaurants require their employees to take food safety training. FOODSAFE⁹ is one food safety program that is designed for the food service industry.



✓ AT HOME

Health Canada and CFIA, along with farmer and consumer organizations, provide information about food safety in the home. *Be Food Safe*¹¹ encourages everyone to follow four safe food handling practices: Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill.



What do public health inspectors do?

Public health inspectors conduct regular inspections of retail food premises, investigate foodborne illnesses, address public complaints, monitor food recalls, and educate food businesses and the general public.¹⁰



Inspecting beef carcasses

